

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007. This bill will be an important tool in the methamphetamine epidemic that is sweeping across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman Gordon for moving these bills so quickly through the Science Committee so that we may continue the antimeth initiatives in this new Congress. The bill charges the EPA with the development of health-based guidelines to assist State and local authorities in cleaning up former meth lab sites.

According to the 2006 National Drug Threat Survey of State and Local Law Enforcement, meth was named most often the greatest drug threat. Well, I am proud to say that my home State of Missouri has been a leader nationwide on issues such as expansion of stem cell research and creation and implementation of the historic preservation tax credit. My State, unfortunately, has the most prevalent meth problem.

Based on data from 2005, Missouri had a reported staggering 2,252 meth lab incidents, the highest in the Nation. Jefferson County, in the heart of my district, has the highest number of meth lab incidents in Missouri, reporting 259 incidents in 2005 alone.

I have seen firsthand the negative and harmful impact of this in my district. I have met with law enforcement throughout my district and compliment them on their aggressive and innovative programs.

But the large amount of meth lab incidents in Missouri means that police, firefighters and other first-line responders are exposed to meth labs in the line of duty. While some States have already passed laws to require cleanup of meth labs, Missouri and many others have not.

This bill is vital, because we need the EPA to create these voluntary guidelines for first responders nationwide. This bill would be beneficial in determining the effects of meth exposure. In addition to creating guidelines for cleanup, the bill would also require the National Academy of Sciences to study the long-term impacts on first responders, children and property owners.